

# **RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs Variance Process**



The Board of Regents voted to approve the Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program Standards for Preschool and Kindergarten Programs on January 7, 2010. The RIDE Approval process under the new standards does not allow for exemptions, which are viewed as permanent exceptions to the standards. The Approval Process does allow for variance requests and approvals. Variance requests are time limited, with a maximum approval length of 5 years.

## Initial Variance Consultation

It is strongly recommended that program administrators consult with RIDE staff regarding the intent to submit a variance request. This consultation will assist the program in preparing a complete variance request by ensuring that all necessary documentation is included in the application. It will also allow RIDE staff to effectively present the variance request to the Variance Committee.

## Request for a Variance

The process for requesting a variance begins with submitting a completed variance request form to RIDE. The variance request form can be downloaded at [www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov). Each variance request will include the following items: an identification of the standard for which the variance is requested; an explanation of the program's current status in relation to the standard in question; a justification for the variance request; a specific plan of tasks and timelines for bringing the program into full compliance with the standard.

## Variance Review

RIDE will convene a committee, as needed, but no more than bi-monthly, to review variance requests and make recommendations regarding variance approval. The Committee will include state employees and other individuals who oversee state-wide early childhood initiatives which might be impacted by RIDE variance approvals. The Committee will not include individuals who operate programs.

## Variance Recommendation

The recommendations of the Variance Committee in response to individual variance requests will require final approval by the Commissioner or authorized representative.